

July 30, 2013



City of Sanibel

800 Dunlop Road
Sanibel, Florida 33957-4096

www.mysanibel.com

AREA CODE - 239

CITY COUNCIL	472-4135
ADMINISTRATIVE	472-3700
BUILDING	472-4555
EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT	472-3111
FINANCE	472-9615
LEGAL	472-4359
NATURAL RESOURCES	472-3700
RECREATION	472-0345
PLANNING	472-4136
POLICE	472-3111
PUBLIC WORKS	472-6397

The Honorable Lizbeth Benacquisto
1926 Victoria Avenue, 2nd Floor
Fort Myers, Florida 33901

Re: Request to Expand the Scope of the Senate Select Committee on Indian River Lagoon and Lake Okeechobee Basin to Include the Caloosahatchee River and Estuary

Dear Senator Benacquisto:

The City of Sanibel is very concerned about the high flow discharges from Lake Okeechobee and the impact they are currently having on our coastal water quality, the ecology of our estuary, and our local economy. Since the Caloosahatchee and St. Lucie rivers are the two major outfalls for Lake Okeechobee, it is critical that scope of the Senate Select Committee on Indian River Lagoon and Lake Okeechobee also include the Caloosahatchee. This will provide a more holistic view of the system to develop solutions that address the problem without putting more of a burden on either estuary. If it is not feasible to expand the scope of the existing Committee, we request that a new Senate Select Committee be established to assess the damaging impacts of the freshwater discharges to the Caloosahatchee River and Estuary and coastal waters of Lee County.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Kevin Ruane, Mayor

Cc: Senator Joe Negron, Chair
Senator Bill Montford, Vice Chair
Senator Denise Grimsley
Senator Arthenia Joyner
Sanibel City Council
Kenneth B. Cuyler, City Attorney

Senator Charles Dean, Vice Chair
Senator Joseph Abruzzo
Senator Alan Hays
Senator Maria Lorts Sachs
Judith A. Zimomra, City Manager

82°18'0"W 82°15'0"W 82°12'0"W 82°9'0"W 82°6'0"W 82°3'0"W 82°0'0"W 81°57'0"W

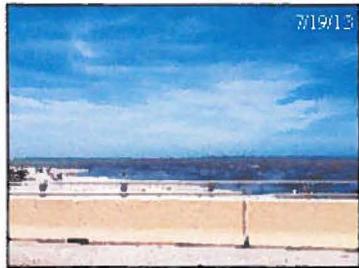
26°36'0"N

26°33'0"N

26°30'0"N

26°27'0"N

26°24'0"N



Caloosahatchee River

Gulf of Mexico





Photo 1: Sanibel Causeway 7-10-13, photo taken by SCCF



Photo 2: Sanibel Causeway 7-10-13, photo taken by SCCF



Photo 3: Sanibel Lighthouse 7-10-13, photo taken by SCCF



Photo 4: Mouth of the Caloosahatchee 7-10-13, photo taken by SCCF



Photo 5: Redfish Pass 7-10-13, Photo taken by SCCF



Photo 6: Redfish Pass 7-10-13, Photo taken by SCCF



Photo 7: Redfish Pass 7-10-13, Photo taken by SCCF



Photo 8: Redfish Pass 7-10-13, Photo taken by SCCF



Photo 9: Blind Pass 7-19-13, Photo taken by City of Sanibel



Photo 10: Blind Pass 7-19-13, Photo taken by City of Sanibel



Photo 11: Blind Pass 7-19-13, Photo taken by City of Sanibel



Photo 12: Blind Pass 7-19-13, Photo taken by City of Sanibel



THE FLORIDA SENATE
SENATOR DON GAETZ
President

July 10, 2013

Debbie Brown
Secretary of the Senate
Suite 405 Capitol
404 South Monroe Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399-1100

Dear Secretary Brown:

Pursuant to Senate Rule 1.5, today I am creating the Senate Select Committee on Indian River Lagoon and Lake Okeechobee Basin (IRLLOB). This committee will serve as a stand-alone select committee. The full membership is as follows:

Joe Negron, Chair
Charles Dean, Vice Chair
Joseph Abruzzo
Denise Grimsley
Arthenia Joyner

Bill Montford, Vice Chair
Lizbeth Benacquisto
Alan Hays
Maria Lorts Sachs

This committee will be staffed by the following:

Staff Directors
Pepper Uchino
Jamie DeLoach

Committee Administrative Assistant
Kim Bonn

The select committee will investigate policies, spending, and any other governmental activities affecting water management in the Indian River Lagoon and Lake Okeechobee Basin. The committee will conduct hearings and direct such work as necessary to complete specified tasks and prepare a report to be submitted by November 4, 2013, to the Senate Committees on Appropriations, Environmental Preservation, and Agriculture. Specific tasks include:

1. Review historic and current state and federal basin wide water management policies and activities, including discharges from Lake Okeechobee into the St. Lucie River and Indian River Lagoon;

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2. Assess the impact of current water release activities and evaluate the results of environmental priorities in the basin;
3. Identify options for state and federal action to improve basin wide water management, including alternatives for discharges from Lake Okeechobee; and,
4. Develop recommendations for improved water management.

Please let me know if you need any further information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Don Gaetz". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "D" and "G".

Don Gaetz
President

Cc: Senators
Pepper Uchino, Staff Director, Senate Committee on Environmental Preservation and Conservation
Jamie DeLoach, Staff Director, Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on General Government
Katherine Halley, Staff Director, Senate Committee on Agriculture